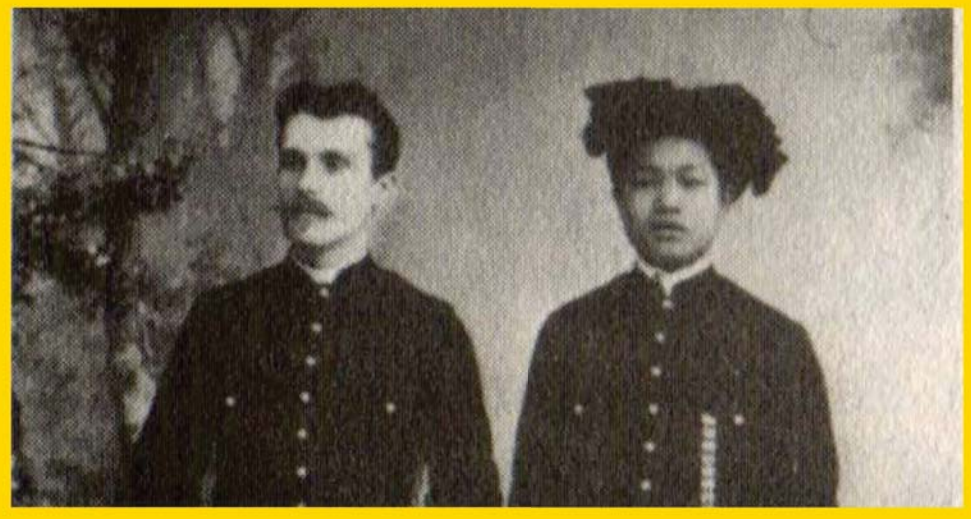
THE TREATISE ON WANDERING INFLUENCES



Quangdzu

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THE SPIRIT OF THE YELLOW RACES

The Treatise on WANDERING INFLUENCES

by QUANGDZU

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE BY

MATGIOI
(ALBERT DE POUVOURVILLE)

- 1896 -

Contributed
to the
translation
of the Treatise on Wandering
Influences, the xuâtdoï
NGUYEN VAN CANG, HI
the second son of the
thay-thuoc NGUYEN THE
DUC, LUAT
Tongsang of the Laotseu Rite

TREATISE

ON

Wandering Influences

EXACT TRANSLATION

BY A. DE POUVOURVILLE (MATGIOI)

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FOREWORD

The translation of the treatise that follows has neither the appearance nor the value of a page of dogma or tradition, as were the previous translations of Laozi's books. The *Treatise on Wandering Influences* does not belong to any Far Eastern religion, and I would be annoyed if it were attributed to the Taoist spirit. As a faithful and respectful transmitter of a doctrine that had never been translated, but only betrayed, and being, moreover, concerned with its integrity, I would not wish to see any foreign element attached to the body of this doctrine, whatever benefit might be derived from the reception given to my work by curious scholars. The dogma and its principles are set out elsewhere; here is the consequence.

The final dogmatic teaching of the Tao is found in the Kan-ing, which Mr Rémusat has translated under the title: *The Book of Rewards and Punishments.* I hope one day to offer a translation of the Kan-ing, which is, in the strict sense of the characters and the doctrine: the treatise on movements (terrestrial or otherwise) determined by human actions, and the consequences that these movements bring about.

Nor, any more than in the synthetic and mystical doctrine, will one find here the Master's concise and rhythmic phrasing. The need to define the analytical forms of a specific issue, and the desire to be understood by everyone in this practical field, imbue the teaching of 'Influences' with a host of symbols and legends designed to strike the memory and the imagination, and introduce, amongst the didactic propositions, passages of inferior literature. We are compelled to retain them, in order to preserve for the treatise the particular form in which it was conceived, a form which was best suited to the author's intentions. A recent composition of moderate inspiration, the treatise on Influences is a curious example of the adaptation, to the modern Chinese mind and to the ordinary scholar, of ancient and, despite everything,

unchangeable. It is above all an example of the application of the principles of the Way to the hypothesis of wandering influences, of which scholars of certain eras have spoken at such length, and whose importance seems today to be coming to the fore once more.

It is no longer a Holy Book, but it is still an important book, albeit a popular one, and books of its kind are distinguished, amongst the books of Dogma, by the generic term ‘Ngoclich’, which might be roughly translated into English as:
‘Manual’.

The Treatise on Influences has not yet had the honour of being translated into a European language; I therefore have no predecessor to displease with philological notes. Those I have added to the text of the book contain only explanations in plain language of certain obscure theories; it is a clarification of a concise text, in which the author did not bother to repeat truths that his Chinese readers would have known from elsewhere.

I therefore mean that the precepts or propositions of which one is about to read the strange assemblage—an assemblage in which one may recognise, by turns, Dante and Paracelsus—should not be attributed to any religion or philosophical school. In China itself, in the presence of the Ngoclich, even though they bear the imperial seals, a smile would not be punished if anyone were to smile. But is a smile worth a reflection? The attitude, during and after the reading, is a true measure of the reader’s intelligence.

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By first translating one of the books devoted to practical matters, before completing the translation of the abstract works, I may be accused of deliberate inversion: but I wished to show how the advice of the Sages might be of use in life. It may be that I have failed in my project, and that the ‘Influences’ do not appear to be of sufficient practical use. Perhaps I should have gone further, and even translated books on practical sciences, such as physiognomy or therapeutic psychology. I admit that the leap from one to the other seemed too great to me; and besides, would some have better understood the obscure texts from which the theories of Chinese Pathogenesis emerged? I doubt it. I do not shy away from obscurity: I am no populariser, and have no desire to offer explanations. Even in China itself, Laozi is not immediately understood by everyone. The obscurity for which he is criticised has the beneficial gift of scaring off the short-sighted, and I am delighted that it is to be found, to the scandal of many, in my translations; this is proof of their fidelity.

It would take more than a man’s lifetime to render the texts of Taoist doctrine into French, in those areas where such doctrine is essential.

I shall no doubt accomplish only a very small part of such a vast task, and I owe a great debt of gratitude to those whose generous assistance makes it easier for me. But such a project is a very long one, and risks being subjected, whilst the work is in progress, to the sarcasm of those who love only finished edifices. I would have wished that many of my contemporaries would spare me such sarcasm, if only for the sake of their own intellectual reputation. For I, a humble individual, stand aloof from such disputes, being

the custodian, not the owner, of these systems. As for the text, it is above criticism. I imagine that the laws which have governed a third of humanity since the beginning of the world need not be concerned with the approval or disapproval of a few Westerners at the end of a century.

MATGIOI

Paris, May 1896.

GENERAL NOTE

The characters cited in brackets are those whose translation could only be achieved by analogy, or by evoking similar or proportional religious symbols, though not identical ones. Thus the character ‘Bothat’ signifies a saint, a scholar, a gifted man, an initiate, an ecstatic, a genius, and various other things, all together. We have no concept so comprehensive, nor a word to express it. Thus the character ‘Dianguc’ can be translated as Hell, the lower realms, purgatory, limbo, the place of punishment, a transformative mechanism, etc. – it is, in reality, the point in time and space where, after earthly death, individuals undergo the changes necessary for their entry into another personal and responsible life. We can therefore only translate Dianguc using similar terms borrowed from Western mysticism, unless we make it a separate entity and a new word, and say: Dianguc, as one might say: Paradise, or Tartarus.

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

A spirit, my Master [*Than-xuong*], descended from heaven[1] and explained clearly to me what I am writing.

Through the years and centuries, the wisdom of the human race grows [*Can-hanh*]: cursed be he who touches it or breaks it.

The Lord on high is gentle and good. The sage [*Bothat*] is but a small part of his manifestations[2] . They converse together, walking one after the other: the sage receives his ideas from him. His will makes the home happy and full of blessings[3] . Now, good influence and improvement are brought about by this book.

All those who wish to understand mankind through it must reflect deeply beforehand.

For this is no trivial matter. It is wrong to speak without reason of kings and men: a man's lifetime would not suffice for it.

One must remain respectful towards the sages, however few in number they may be[4] .

Month after month [*can-giap*] the spirit walks and wanders at night. Those who walk at night must be won over.

For external influences affect men, and astrology [*ngoctuan*] proves this.

Everyone speaks of it without knowing anything about it; but he who knows can turn evil into good[5] . Illnesses are on the rise, but he knows their end, and the means to a long life.

The wife, the husband and the children are together, but [6]their thoughts are at odds.

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[1] Than-xuong: light made manifest. See *'La Pathogénie* Chinoise' (Chamuel, 5 Rue de Savoie).

[2] Literally: a rather limited manifestation: that is to say, a diminished, reduced, incomplete manifestation.

[3] Literally: dry and very clean.

[4] The sentence is elliptical: it can be translated as follows: 'those who have understood these things are respectfully placed in the place of the saints (Ngaidinh). But where and how many are they!'

[5] The 'Mâ', a spirit that walks at night, is a bringer of disease.

[6]

A clear-sighted will transforms their illnesses into health, and their discord into harmony. But the illness thus removed falls upon another far away.

The sickly wind dances like a wave crest and slips by like a pirate[7] . He who reflects on these things may guard himself against them.

It comes, goes, passes through and returns: its influence is great. Thus the tree is strong, yet the worm passes through it.

Nevertheless, the wise man is confident: he works, thinks constantly, and knows that, on a cold night, the icy, wandering spirit flits close to the ground.

It is a danger to the healthy, living man.

At night, it prevents his sleep and sends him sadness, the beginning of illness[8] .

[7] Here we consider only the success of diverting the wind, without knowing where it is blown.

[8] That is to say [*according to the Tongsang*], the man afflicted with the [*mâ*] germ goes to bed in good health and wakes with a start in the middle of the night, his mind full of anxiety and sadness.

CHAPTER II

For all mankind, in truth, a spirit came down from Heaven to make me write.

Even the great and the wise who have not heard this cannot know it; all those who have gathered to discuss and reflect upon it will, after their death, be great spirits [*Dia-phu*]: the wicked, no.

All who live desire the continuation of their family: the wealthiest sometimes have few children: for those who are always ill have no chance of having any [*xom ô cothat banh*][1] perhaps they will live to a ripe old age? perhaps they will not die by water, iron or fire? perhaps they will die of famine or plague? The spirit of Heaven will protect from these evils the man who knows and who respects.

Someone who wishes to act may perhaps choose at random, for their deed, the first and fifteenth days of the moon.

Do you wish to act? Act according to your strength. The good or bad deed is already in your heart; but its manifestation may be swift or delayed. Let the Kings and the great ones who must act consult the God who is in Heaven, and not the god of the pagodas[2] . And Heaven will be pleased. The evil deed is known and recorded by God at the moment of its intention [*môt thoi*]. One must not act in any excess, but in accordance with the Good[3] .

A bad deed always stems from a bad principle, one that has already been ignored or forgotten[4].

When you act, and before you act, think about acting, but think of the Spirit, so that it may allow you to act as you have thought. All thinkers have said this. All matters then weigh no more heavily than they do upon a King.

You must state your family name [*Ho*], the name of your village, the time of the matter, and consult the oracle [*Bat Thu*][5] . Whether there is a way or not under these conditions, the spirit will tell you.

The spirits dispose of the thirty-eight *Chung* species for good or ill. Therefore, think of God and worship him.

The sage who writes this book thinks, as he writes, of mosquitoes, butterflies, men, women, everything, of faults and repentance, of all created things, and of those that reproduce [*vat phan*]. What he finds in the outside world he gathers within his mind.

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[1] Literally: leper. Leprosy is taken as a paradigm of an incurable disease.

[2] The character 'Dinh' used here indicates that the treatise is not Confucian.

[3] Literally: neither by the great wind, nor by the great sun.

[4] This may be understood to mean: either that the thought which produces the act is already forgotten; or that the act has a cause prior to that thought, and currently unknown to us.

[5] Divinatory consultations using the Quai, in accordance with the rules of the I Ching.

The sage speaks to men of the two principles[6] and to the ‘diatang’ of the the ‘bo-that’, the eighteen classes.

And he speaks all that is good in his soul.

He commits a grave error, he who, when a man who knows but a single character[7] seeks knowledge from him, fails to answer: he is like the ignorant: when he dies and descends into darkness[8] , he loses his tongue.

[6] Of the two principles: Am, Duong; that is to say, the universality of creation.

[7] The schoolboy who is only at his first lesson [*nhet chu*].

[8] ‘Dianguc’ or the prison of the earth. As a place, see the ‘general note’. As inhabitants, these are the wandering, unused forces that gravitate towards human life and are capable of both good and evil, depending on the driving force that governs them.

CHAPTER III

This book contains wise precepts.

The wise man may know everything in the book Tain Giao[1] [*This is what it says:*]

The slightest word, clear or obscure, good or bad, that comes from your mouth, has already been recorded.

The Saints [*Phât*], the spirits [*thien*] and living men form three distinct races.

They are all similar, yet nothing is the same[2] . The earthly goods that Heaven does not give you, and which you take, slip away from you and are of no use to you.

Yet everyone seeks happiness.

The spirit speaks in the temples [*chua*]. This is the way to see far into the distance[3].

The sun [4]illuminates everything and allows everything to penetrate the mind; one cannot confuse the good with the bad, nor mix them together.

Judgement, striking down some, [*yet*] saving others, cannot be altered.

There is therefore, in the midst of the earth, a Space[5].

Men who are confident and truthful will see clearly, as if in the midst of the sea[6]. The living and the dead are in the midst of the sea: all affirmations and all negations are made clear. The wicked man receives his punishment after death: but Heaven sometimes allows him to live for a long time.

An act, depending on whether it is good or evil [*am-duong*], yields only flowers, or else fruit[7] . Of several similar trees, equally alive, one grows tall, the other remains small[8] . Heat [*duong*] brings forth flowers, and the flowers fall to the ground [*dianguc*]. This is true.

Thus Thaituong and Batkhoi were alike.

They grew as far apart as an hour's walk.

In life, they were powerful and slew forty times ten thousand men; thus, after their death, one became a snake [*tuong-dzan*] and the other a sea pig: they have

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[1] The Tamgiao is the commentary on the divinatory section of the Yijing.

[2] Literally: 'they speak the same thing, but say it differently.'

[3] This refers only to temples, and not to Confucian pagodas [*dinh*].

([4]) Sun, taken in the symbolic sense of 'true'.

([5]) Like a 'warehouse'.

[6] The sea, where nothing is hidden from view by the mountains.

[7] It is never said: good or bad, but: part of the Am or the Duong.

[8] The parable of Batkhoi is famous, but it should not be seen as a theory of metempsychosis. The parable adds that the thunder which struck Batkhoi 'wrote the condemnation' on the scales of his back.

struck by thunder, so that [*the design of Heaven*] might be clearly seen. They fell amidst the filth.

Under King Nhaduong, Lylamphu was a great but wicked dignitary[9] . When he died, he became a pig, and seven generations [*of his ancestors*] with him; and nine generations before those seven were buffaloes; and his children are and will be pigs: if the wind blows and thunder rumbles, they flee to the banks of the rivers; and when they die there, they become mosquitoes. They can do no good[10] .

The King then ordered all the villages to learn the law, to know it, and to repeat it often. Thus a hundred generations have learnt; in the past they knew nothing of the *lower* things. Today they know, and are at peace.

A man who lives a long life in wickedness [*Banhtho*] becomes a buffalo[11] for just as long in Dianguc. Three times wicked, once good, the punishment is remitted. The book Tamgiao therefore sets out what concerns good and evil [*Am-duong*], and their relationship. Anyone may open their mouth once to speak well, but if the heart is evil, Heaven marks them, and Kong-tzeu says: 'No, that is not true.'

The temple is bright and adorned: the spirit of Heaven descends there, and distinguishes the good from the wicked.

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[9] The legend of Lylamphu is intended to illustrate the power of atavism, and, through their investigations into punishment, the influence of ancient and hidden causes. Transformations into harmful animals are parables of the transformation into malevolent wandering forces.

[10] They are incapable of doing any good, because of their habits. However, according to the oral commentary, if, out of a hundred evil deeds, they were to perform one good deed, they would spend a long period of time in atoning penance, after which they would once again become living human beings.

[11] This legend applies to Banhtho, who lived for 800 years and was a buffalo for the last 200 years of his life, to atone for his sins.

CHAPTER IV

What I am about to say is very difficult for the Wise, and within the reach of few people.

He who loses his fortune, says Mengzi, could not have foreseen it in advance.
men are like the roots of a tree; the gods [*Phât*] and the ancestors [*Ongtô*] give it flowers and fruit. What they give, one must not throw away, but keep in one's home[1] .

Just as it is said that the loss of one's fortune is the greatest of misfortunes, so too must one lose nothing of the teaching and keep it within oneself.

In times of wealth, the memory of past hardship must inspire foresight for the future[2] .

He who, whilst walking, rises up and comes to see all things from that high vantage point, is great [*thanhcong*]; he alone can understand us. A single text may be mistaken; but several texts that agree are in the truth.

When Chiquang climbed the high mountain, he saw everything at a single glance and attained knowledge; he came to understand the dark forces at work beneath the earth [*diatang*].

It is in this region [*Phongdo*] that the King of the Underworld dwells, and that he judges the spirits, good or evil, of dead men. Man has eighteen thoughts: the underworld reserves eighteen acts of vengeance [*for evil thoughts*][3] .

The Saints [*bôthat*] are well disposed towards the happiness of men. He who, with his eyes or his mouth, fails to recognise them, descends to the underworld [*dianguc*].

There are one hundred and thirty-eight kinds of inferiors [4] . Eighteen sages have thought this.
Believe it: they conversed together, and created new knowledge.

The Emperor saw all the prisoners[5] and then composed the Book of Heaven, Earth, and the Lower Realms.

His word is clear as a diamond: his voice resounds like thunder.
Those who work with him and follow in his footsteps are free from torment.

The child of a learned father is prepared to be so himself.

It is not just the Khiduong: there is the Khiam and the Khiduong, closely united; the Khiduong is the[6] breath of the living man, the Khiam is the lower spirit of the dead. If one does not recognise this union, all thought is illusory.

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[1] This entire passage must be understood in terms of Science.

[2] This phrase is a popular proverb concerning rice harvests and famine.

[3] According to oral tradition, there are eighteen ways of thinking about goodness, and eighteen celestial attributes; there are eighteen kinds of rewards, and each is the prerogative of one of the eighteen wisdoms.

[4] These are the one hundred and thirty-eight punishments or transformations that await those who break the law.

[5] Those imprisoned in the flesh, that is to say, the living.

The living spirit passes through nine circles.

The king's word is like a diamond; he who studies it possesses the universal eye. This word is equivalent to that of ten kings descending from Heaven. He who utters it sees the twenty circles of the universe, in the past and in the future.

He has lived: he shall live.

[6] It is not possible to translate khiam and khiduong, the male and female principles, hot and cold, dry and damp, light and dark, active and passive, positive and negative, creative and receptive, etc.: This is the principle, one in its essence, dual in its manifestation, and consequently in its successions. It is therefore better to retain the term from Chinese philosophy, the reader being required to apply it, according to the context, to the most appropriate of the manifestations.

CHAPTER V

Beneath the stars and the moon, which shine upon the entire Universe, the destiny of children is written in characters, as in the Book of Tuvi[1] .

[1] The Book of Tuvi, which is taught only to doctors, is the Far Eastern genethliac. There would be much to say about this single isolated sentence, which intentionally forms an entire chapter. This is not the place for such elaborations.

PART TWO

CHAPTER ONE

Now this is the essence of the Science that everyone must keep in mind.

Tongduongtu, Bothat, came down from heaven to teach it.

Hantien wrote down his teachings. And so everything is faithfully recorded.

Now, Tongduongtu sees the Lower Ones, and the influence of the spirits of the dead[1] .

This Science must be preserved; it is the root of all science and all existence. Men must gather its precepts, preserve them, and pass them on to their children.

For example, there are twenty types of human:

The strong man has a red face and protruding eyes[2] . So spoke Tongduongtu. A man of this sort acts little; but when he acts, he is strong and good.

Bienduc, in his studies and commentaries, says that, in one's sleep, seeing a parent or an ancestor who has already died is not a bad omen[3] .

LiKhanhdoc says that paying homage to heaven, when it does not spring from a humble and well-disposed heart, is harmful.

All these sages set out for Quangtien Mountain, reached the summit, and then attained knowledge by looking out over the landscape.

During the reigns of Kings Nhaduong and Nhaly, these sages contemplated knowledge and practised virtue; this is of the utmost importance[4] .

Knowledge transforms the wicked into the good: this is of the second importance[5] .

Bothat Monglan affirmed the excellence of the Book and drew near to affirm it[6] .

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[1] Literal: dianguc Khiam: the cold, inferior spirit.

[2] An example of the science of physiognomy, to which one must devote oneself, as well as to the psychic and moral sciences, of which two examples follow.

[3] Bienduc and LiKanhdoc are two philosophers from one of Laozi's schools.

[4] Literally: number eleven. The ten indicates that a number of superfluities has been mentioned previously.

[5] Literally: number twelve.

It was during the height of summer that Monglan confirmed: third importance. Knowledge speaks directly of all that is good and evil: third importance.

[6] Gan: that is to say, very close at hand, immediately understandable. Monglan is a foundling, taken in by a mandarin: having become a general, he fights against the mountain Amazons—half-woman, half-phoenix—and finds his mother amongst these supernatural warriors. So goes the popular legend.

CHAPTER II

Lydonkhanh contributed to this work. Chu-hué offered his reflections. The diatang Vuong took care of the transcription into characters. The master of thunder inspired them all. He came once, but there is no way to recall him or to know him.

It is he who governs the entire universe[1] , and who brings light everywhere.

Science has always existed; but from the day it is written down, it is called contemporary. It could have served all the children of times past. It was a mystery[2] without guidance and very difficult.

Today it is revealed.

[1] Literally: the hundred scales.
[2] Literally: it was an envelope without an address.

PART THREE

THE TEN CHAPTERS OF THE ENGRAVINGS[1]

I. The Genies of the Stars.

An engraving depicting the King of the Genies, with the good ones on his left and the evil ones on his right.

The great King of the Eastern Prisons.

Engraving depicting the King of the East, protector and discoverer of fire, with five courtiers.

II. The Holy Diatang Lêkien.

The King of the Lower Wandering Spirits [*Phongdo*].

Engraving depicting this King and, at his feet, vague, wandering forms with no apparent faces.

III. Xa Than, the land of the Genies.

Engraving depicting the lower spirits, compelled by the sages [*Bothat*] to take refuge in Phongdo.

In a small cartouche, a devotee bears gifts to the King of Phongdo.

Huylinh, Punisher of Crime.

Engraving depicting Huylinh, the spirit messenger of heavenly justice, with his officers. In the exergue, in the left-hand corner: 'Behold the spirit who dwells in the sanctuaries.'

IV. King Than Quang, the second sovereign.

Engraving depicting the second master of spirits: the people in his retinue have buffalo horns on their heads; he pursues the wandering lesser spirits.

King Sogiang, the second ruler.

[1] Each of these ten chapters consists of two engravings, with a caption for each, and occasionally a few explanatory cartouches. Had it been possible, these symbols would have been better reproduced exactly as they are. However, determining their stance or action is sufficient to explain their parabolic significance.

Engraving depicting this king, who commands the Water Spirits; in a cartouche, the rebellious spirits are in prison. With the caption: ‘the prison is made of ice.’

V. King Thongdé, the third sovereign.

Engravingdepicting this king, who commands the spirits of of the mountains.

King Nguquang, the fourth sovereign.

Engraving depicting this King, who commands the Spirits of the rivers: as the inscription reads: ‘This is the flat land.’ Figures lie prostrate in the rice fields.

VI. King Dzan-An, the fifth sovereign.

An engraving depicting this king, who rules over the Underworld. In the background, small stakes and a fortress containing numerous prisoners. Inscription on the wall:
‘Huyên of Vang Bô.’

King Hathanh, sixth sovereign.

Engraving depicting this King, who commands the spirits of the dead and the rites of the cemeteries. In the background, the stars, each guarding a spirit, with the inscription: ‘These are the spirits of the dead.’

VII. King Thayson, seventh ruler.

Engraving depicting this king, who commands the mines and the spirits that guard the earth. Inscription: Lower escaped spirits [*thanly dianguc*].

King Dothi, the eighth ruler.

An engraving depicting this King, who commands the caravans and trade: he has the spirits hostile to the traveller cut in two with a saw.

VIII. Holothi, the ninth ruler.

Engraving depicting this King, who commands the spirits of ponds and marshes. He pursues enemy spirits with dogs.

King Thienluan, the tenth sovereign.

Engraving depicting this king, who commands the spirits of houses and porticoes. Below, the household spirit.

IX. The temple of the Batquai [*Luc dao*].

Within a circle surrounded by the Batquai[2] stands a large three-storey pagoda. From the upper left storey emerge the Phong-han chiefs, propitious gods, who manifest themselves as men; from the middle left storey emerge the thay, quadrupeds and mammals, indifferent spirits of the dead; from the lower left storey emerge the Nhet, fish and crustaceans, evil spirits of the dead.

[2] The Batquai are the eight original trigrams of Fohi, upon which the divinatory astronomical systems are built, and from which Chinese ideographic writing derives.

From the upper right level emerge the spirits of men who have acted wickedly, and who are destined for one of the eighteen torments.

From the middle right level emerge the maû, unintelligent spirits (*birds*).

From the lower right level emerge the Hoa, fallen spirits [*invertebrates*].

The temple of the Batquai is that of justice after death; and whatever emerges from it, to enter another life, begins that life in a body and an intellect, which are the reward and punishment of the previous life.

The engraving depicts: on the left, at the top, sages and scholars [*bothat*]; in the middle, a cat, a tiger, a buffalo and a horse; below, a fish, a crab and a snail. – On the right, at the top, men of the lower classes, warriors and peasants; in the middle, a passerine, a duck, a crow; at the bottom, a snake, a worm, a prawn.

X. The Great Gate of the Sages [*Thiendao*].

Engraving depicting the bliss of scholars and philosophers: they enter eternal life, where they are received by a spread-winged dove: the inscription is engraved on a sacred banner: [*phuong*]:

'He who, in life, respected the commands of Heaven and the Sacred Rites, descends after his death, free, to Phongdo: The King knows that he was good, that his spirit was broad, and that he followed the *Universal Religion* [*codao*], and he grants him freedom of action.'

Final engraving, depicting a scholar seated and enjoying peace, surrounded by his servants.

CHAPTER XI

ON LEGENDARY TERRORS.

The wise king who wrote this book was granted insight into the very nature of the lower realms. King Giacanh had an excellent heart: he was the first[1] .

The ninth circle of Hell is a mass of frozen metal. The tenth circle is of black and murky water. In the thirteenth, intense heat burns the dead. In the sixteenth circle, typhoons reign eternally.

The first circle is a bottomless abyss. In the second, the shadows run without rest. In the sixth, thunder roars and lightning strikes; the seventh is a muddy swamp. In the eleventh, the shadows die, are reborn, and die again.

In the thirteenth, the damned are roasted and turned over the fire[2] . In the fourteenth, they are squeezed and crushed between enormous rocks.

In the first circle they are flayed and have their bellies cut open[3] . In the fourth circle they are tightly imprisoned[4] ; in the ninth their muscles and nerves are torn out; in the tenth, they are bound and laid at the bottom[5] .

In the fifth circle, their intestines are torn out; in the eighth, their bones are broken with blows from sticks; in the eleventh, they are dried up to death [*as if before a blazing sun*][6] .

In the thirteenth, their tongues are torn out; in the fourteenth, they are hung by their feet; in the fifteenth, they are quartered.

In the tenth, they are devoured by worms and leeches[7] . In the fourteenth, they are infected with foul odours until their death[8] , and their decay remains.

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[1] Lit. ‘Giap’, the first sign of the duodecimal cycle, corresponding to pure water. Emperor Giacanh was the one who established the teaching of physiognomy.

[2] Different circles are numbered several times; the author first indicates their nature and then the torments endured there. Thus, in the thirteenth circle, which is one of intense heat, the damned are cooked.

[3] They fall into the bottomless abyss, because the sight of a split belly is unbearable.

[4] This is the consequence of extreme cold.

[5] At the bottom of the black water.

[6] They are perpetually parched, for they are reborn.

[7] The leeches of the water in which they are immersed.

[8] The rot caused by their hanging. But this does not fit with the torment of the rocks.

The author has not given, even orally, the reason for the inversion of the circles or for their classification into various sub-sections. This Chapter is called the Chapter of Legendary Terrors, to indicate that it is intended to terrify the masses.

CHAPTER XII

This is the current science. Man's will acts immediately[1] .

Thienquan, who lived in Quandong, near the sea, knew how to drive away evil spirits; he was kind, strong, upright and straightforward. To those who deny his power, he replies: GO AND SEE THE SCALES [*boc*] [2] , ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE FORTNIGHT: SPEAK TO THE KINGS VAN AND VU[3] : ALSO BEFORE THE ALTAR OF THE SPIRIT OF THE CITIES, AND LET THE COPPER SAPÈQUES FALL[4] . LOOK AT THE SMOKE OF THE INCENSE[5] .

Giacanh was ill for eight years, and for eight years had incense burnt in a golden censer; he had raging fevers, would seize the doctors, and shake them. All his servants trembled; then he would cool down and collapse. He slept, and at night would rise, walk about, and his eyes thought they could see.

King Vu and Thienquan, knowing of this illness, came and saw the Honda[6] . They asked Giacanh if he wished to be cured, and forbade any buffalo meat from entering the house, saying that then the Honda would speak and give him a means of recovery.

Now, everyone in that house had been eating buffalo meat with impunity for ten years.

Daoquang had been confined to his home for nine years; one day he came to Thienquan's house, ill and bent double; he showed his body; his blood was in black patches; he had pricked himself with a needle, and the blood had flowed, as wide as a sapèque, but flowed ceaselessly. This was very difficult to cure.

By appealing to Heaven, it is possible to be cured; by consulting the oracle, throwing a hundred sapèques, and cutting them, the blood will cease to flow[7] .

If such an illness exists, one must take the book, speak to Heaven, light incense, and, leaving the house, make supplications to Thienquan at the four corners. Thienquan will subdue the evil influence.

In the morning, one must perform the coin ceremony and scatter rice. Thienquan will bring about a cure. This is the truth. To speak to Heaven[8] one must have something before one[9] . When the heart is sincere, the time and the value do not matter.

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[1] The human spirit, sharpened by willpower, achieves its goal. This sentence explains what follows.

[2] The scales of the tortoise, that is to say the Books, in remembrance of the sacred legend of Lacthu.

[3] Van is the learned king; Vu, the ignorant and warlike king.

[4] A divination tool, the sapèques bearing one of the Batquai in relief.

[5] As the sticks are held in front of the chest, this should also be interpreted as: think and walk upright.
Thienquan's response includes the full invocation formula, a formula common to both Taoism and Confucianism. This is the only evidence here of a practical ritual tradition.

[6] Lit.: the cold stone, that is to say, the evil influence, hard and cold (*like the Am principle*).

[7] One slowly scatters a hundred coins on the ground; 'the knife' that cuts through the stream strikes the coins, which scatter from the pile, and the Batquai constitute the response.

All those who seek Thienquan's aid must place his image [*on the altar*]. This is of the utmost importance.

If one encounters the Quangu fish[10] , one must not give it to others; for the good becomes evil, and the healthy, sick. It is true that there are very few Quangu.

Open your eyes to understand the science. In the seventh month of the year Than Mao, Daoquang threw the Honda into the river. This is the truth, and has been witnessed.

[8] Thienquan, with a change in accentuation, also means 'heaven'. There is therefore a symbolism here that is impossible to render in French.

[9] That is to say, holding the propitiatory staffs [for the people] or the ritual offering.

[10] The Quangu fish refers to the benefit of meeting Thienquan, which is rare, and to the disadvantages of mistaking false scholars for true scholars.

CHAPTER XIII

This is the knowledge that cures ill conditions.

To heal, knowledge of the mind is sufficient; there is no need to feel the pulse.

It is good for men to be like gold and diamonds, and not like vulgar things that can be bought and kept with money. He who keeps knowledge in his mind is like gold and diamonds and is filled with happiness and riches. He who does not keep it harbours misfortune and misery within his home.

Thus, in the year Ngam-tinh, in the month of Doan, Daoquang was sad and ill. I know not how many remedies had already been taken and discarded[1] : despite this, he was still very ill [*Am-am*]. The wind made him shiver and gnash his teeth [*nghiên*][2] . All the people, frightened, raised their arms to the heavens; he was letting himself die[3] .

His mother, very old yet still strong, spoke to him in vain: he is like a child before birth; he does not know whether he is living or dying; will he be dead tomorrow or not?

Now science says that this illness is called Tuyenhao[4] . It says that it can be cured; one must always seek a cure in accordance with the will of heaven. Science acts [*hung*][5] , and healing comes immediately. But to succeed, one must always act with sincerity and confidence.

Thus, in the year Ngam-tinh, in the month of Doan, Daoquang, having made sacrifices with a righteous heart, saw his illness come to an end.

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[1] Recognised as useless or ineffective.
[2] Nghiên: nervously, cataleptically.
[3] Literally: He was lost: that is [*To denote a state of unconsciousness, or of indifference in the case of consciousness*].
[4] Literally: the cruel illness.
[5] 'Hung' is the character that signifies the intervention of a friendly power.

PART FOUR

CHAPTER ONE

Here the sage imparts knowledge to all living men and women, so that they may know their past lives [*thienphi*][1] , and that, from being evil and wicked, they may become good.

The sage tells men, whether enlightened or unenlightened [*u-minh*][2] ·that the souls of the sages are and dwell in the lower realms. If all the multitude of men [*thaploai*] and animals [*gian-quan*] could join hands and bow them down[3] , the Saints [*Bothat*] would fill them with knowledge and riches. The sage has pity on the shadows of the dead. If they emerge and the sun strikes them, they can no longer return, and the wandering forces[4] seize them [*cui*].

They seize them, torture them, and cast them into the prison of the six paths [*luc dao*][5] .

This fate is reserved for the wicked: the wise man knows that they suffer greatly there. They acknowledge that, whilst alive, they acted wrongly and cannot excuse themselves.

For one evil deed, which the Saints [*Bothat*] know and avenge, two good deeds erase it and set one free.

When men act well, their children already act well with ease.
If they are thus, upon their death, the spirits lead them to happiness[6] [*Thiendao*].

If two deeds are evil, after death the misery is threefold: the wise man seeks to show the living the paths to happiness.

Evil feelings, desires for revenge and envy, even in childhood, lead to the lower realms.

---

[1] The previous causes of their suffering.

[2] Learned or ignorant.

[3] That is to say, to reflect and pray.

[4] The Am-Duong principle. If the shadows [*which partake of Am*] expose themselves to the sun [*the manifestation of Duong*], they are annihilated and left as prey for the wandering spirits.

[5] The prison of the six paths [*luc dao*] is none other than the temple of the Batquai, where, after death, the shadows of the imperfect are confined, and from where, following judgement, they emerge into six possible situations.

[6] The Thiendao is the 'Great Gate of the Sages', through which pass the souls that do not go to the Lucdao.

The sage wishes for all men to follow the paths of happiness: when they have acted well, their spirits do not go to the lower realms[7] . When they have been learned, good and studious, they command the wandering forces, and do not go to the lower realms, where spirits are sad, wicked and sick, after a sad, wicked and sick life.

Those of ill will, who scorn the Law and the Ancestors, are unbelievers, and whose spirit is bloodthirsty[8] , are cast out of heaven, die completely, and their shadow is blue[9] .

Their tongue, which has spoken evil, and their heart, which has thought evil, are punished.

Immediately after death, one sees the wandering spirits; but before that, it is impossible.

Man, who, after a century, gradually loses his blood and strength, is unaware of this. All this [*phach*] dies, but the soul [*hon*] survives[10] entirely. And the evil soul descends to the lower realms [*Luc dao*].

All men must follow my example. I have seen many living beings who were unhappy after their death, unable to act or think like men. They knew the Lichdaï and even the Tamgiao, but they lacked knowledge[11] .

Nhaduong and Nhangu knew them [*the Lichdaï and the Tamgiao*]. All men were ignorant, just like them [*of the science*]. They could act a hundred times, but not once excellently.

Now, one sees the appearance[12] .

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[7] They go to Thiendao.

[8] Think only of evil, symbolised by blood, its influence, and its desire.

[9] Like the dead fires of the ponds, and the evil gods of Buddhist theogony.

[10] Phach is everything that decays. Hôn is everything that does not decay.

[11] Lichdaï is practical appropriation. Tamgiao is hieratic appropriation. Both terms are used here in a general sense.

[12] We see the appearance of science, which leads to its reality, and points the way to perfect action.

CHAPTER II

The saints [*Bothat*] have given me an eye to see them. May all men act well in their hearts.

All living beings who are ill, men or women, young or old, have done wrong [*in the past*]. Their hearts were evil.

The wise help me to write: they wish for all men to change their ways.

Good deeds, unknown to all, are known in the place beyond death, and the spirit wards off misfortune.

Disciples who despise the wise, children who show no respect for their fathers, will die a violent and miserable death. Tigers and snakes will pursue them relentlessly; they will then fall into the lower prisons.

Whether one acts well or ill, moving forward or backward, from the first to the last day, all is recorded. Those who act well do not descend to the lower realms; they are easy to recognise; a good life is held up as an example to all.

The king of the lower realms causes all the spirits of the dead to gather and speak.

Thien giai said: 'Good, good, one must be careful; to avoid unhappiness, one must not repeat a bad deed'.

A resolute action can turn evil into good. But the evil is still done[1] . Those who constantly think of virtue never do anything wrong [*men*]. Those [*women*] who act well become men on the path to heaven[2] .

The deceased father, for whom his children pray to Heaven, has a happy fate. Even if he has committed a wrong deed, one must speak with confidence and without delay[3] .

One must speak to Thodia [*thandat*][4] in Thanhn-goang, and to all the spirits; one must utter the name of the deceased, and one must always think of him, whether or not he is 'phung'[5] .

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[1] Evil is always marked and does not fade away with subsequent good deeds.

[2] This symbolism, used to explain the original inferiority of women, is very rarely expressed and is not found in the oral traditions of Laozi's doctrine.

[3] Without having had time to find a detour.

[4] The spirit of the Earth.

[5] 'Phung': displayed in the house, as a statue or tablet. Here lies the beginning of the evocative ritual.

CHAPTER III

Thus spoke the great sage:

All men, living or dead, both the good and those whose spirits are in the power of the lower beings, are listed here. Evil spirits are like a rocky outcrop in the middle of the sea: the path leading to them runs westwards; the water is yellow; the path is black; men of upright heart never see them.

Children, whether male or female, who have died without having acted, are there, having passed through the Thaploaï[1] .

The wise man sees men's deeds, and, based on them, can turn men into women, and women into men. Thus a poor woman with a generous heart becomes a man; a rich and miserly man becomes a woman[2] .

Those who have often acted wrongly, for little good, will go to this stone house, which is ten cubits[3]in size.

At the top of the wall, on the eastern side, there are seven characters, before which the illiterate[4] (*vomieu*) remain.

Those who have acted wickedly, or practised magic with their bodies, the king gathers them into his lower kingdom. They have acted wickedly unwittingly. They have amassed gold, without knowing it[5]: whilst alive, they acted as they pleased. They entered the pagodas, and their eyes saw nothing; dead, they have fallen into the lowest torment.

As men, they mocked the gods who gave them life: why did they act wickedly towards their father[6] ?

They were ungrateful to their benefactors, yet believed they were doing right. Yet, driven by their evil spirit[(7)] they wished to throw themselves into the water to die there.

Those who are grateful to the gods and their ancestors have nothing to fear from the temptations of their minds[8] .

Those who conceal their evil thoughts do not die immediately: though their true nature remains unknown, their place in the lower realms is already marked out for them. When they die, they descend to the Temple of the Six Paths, and even there they remain isolated[9] . When they are reborn, it is in

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[1] This is the limbo of the unintelligent.

[2] This is a consequence of the hermetic Taoist doctrine of the involutive inferiority of women.

[3] Lit.: ten gardens: this is a common measure.

[4] This is how the pagodas of the illiterate and the war mandarins are designated, as opposed to the other mandarins, who alone are literate.

[5] They have retained their good intentions without putting them to good use.

[6] Disrespecting one's father is the gravest of crimes, according to tradition and the law.

[7] The instinct for destruction, or the outward manifestation of the vengeance of norms.

[(8)] [An]inferior spirit bound to the body.

[9] Lit.: they do not feed anyone.

the hour of the dog or the pig[10] . They cannot live long. This is evident from their general appearance[11] [*Quanhinh*].

Perhaps they will live only seventy days; perhaps they will reach one or two years. But they cannot live any longer. Their bodies are always leading them to ruin[12] . Their mother too is evil [*and they are her punishment*]. Their birth inspires dread. A previous evil life leads to such childhoods.

All the wicked are kept after their death in a single place, and are led there and guarded by the wandering forces [*Tuongcui*].

They become children and die immediately[13] and fall back to the lower realms, and so on. Such is the teaching of the sage: that evil deprives one of life. At the end of the trials decreed by Heaven, then they may become men again, and act rightly, and no longer fear punishment.

Perhaps someone has mocked Heaven and its laws: his face is red and his teeth clenched; the wind of his words descends to the lower realms; he falls into the great abysses, where his face is cut asunder, and cannot, for a long time, return to the company of men.

Just as the scholar, however learned, who goes to take his examinations, forgets a character in the presence of his examiners, so too do men, who, amidst good deeds, have sometimes acted wrongly, descend into less sorrowful limbo. Outwardly, they are learned; inwardly, they are cold and black with fear[14] . And their minds are clouded.

Even if they were to go ten times, the spirit remains the same[15] . Their thoughts are good, but when writing them down they spill ink onto the paper; when they die, they cannot immediately claim a place in Heaven. It is therefore because their lives are evil, and they cannot leave the lower realms.

All men and women speak to the Lord of Heaven with their mouths. One must slowly think of Him in one's heart, and then there is no need to speak or write prayers.

Prayers must be said on the first day of each month: on that day Heaven comes to bestow its gifts and to know one's intentions.

The first day of the second month is a happy day, on which no evil deeds must be committed. At the slightest evil deed, death comes[16] .

Let the gifted man make an offering of a blue robe and a small statue of a child. That is the right thing to do.

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[10] At the beginning of the year, the sixth and seventh hours: the hourly cycles advance with the weeks and days.

[11] Lit.: The Book of Appearances. This is the state of the body at the moment of birth: it also refers to external circumstances.

[12] The evil spirit gives them, as death approaches, unconscious temptations.

[13] Without having acted, nor earned any merit.

[14] Continuation of the parable of the scribes.

(15) Even ifthey were to sit the exams ten times.

[16] Intellectual death.

CHAPTER IV

The lower realms are the abode of the wicked. A boundless ocean churns there.

Law-abiding men and women, still young, who have married,
are afraid of the spirits they see, fearing they will have no children. If they are
submissive to their parents, let them place their trust in the Books. If they are at odds with them, then they forget a virtue[1] .

When Daoquang was ill, a doctor came to treat him conscientiously, but he was unaware of the wandering forces, and all the money spent was of no use in bringing about a cure. By turning to heaven, one can be cured at once.

Now, not all who are ill need a doctor constantly, but rather Heaven's aid, according to the Book.

Even if I were ill for a hundred years, in spite of the doctors, a moment's prayer to Heaven will restore my health.

Perhaps I acted wrongly in a past circumstance of which I am no longer aware; repentance for these unknown misdeeds will heal me.

But one must have a righteous mind and profound knowledge to cast the wandering forces down to the lower realms.

And if the wandering forces did not fall upon an innocent person who prays to Heaven, Heaven would not cast them down to the lower realms. They suffer Heaven's reproach and punishment:

END.

[1] That is to say, they are wicked.

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